

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present patent application based on the following remarks are respectfully requested.

By this Amendment, claims 1, 17, 20 and 22 are amended and claims 21 and 23-27 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter therein. Support for the amendments to the claims may be found throughout the original description. No new matter has been added. After entry of this Amendment, claims 1-20 and 22 will remain pending in the patent application.

As a preliminary matter, Applicant would like to express appreciation for the courtesies extended by Supervisory Examiner Patel to Applicant's representative during the interview conducted on April 30, 2008 (hereinafter the "Interview"). The substance of the Interview is incorporated into the remarks below and constitutes Applicant's record of the interview.

Claims 1-2, 13-18, 20-22, 25 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) based on U.S. 4,956,561 to Tamer. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 21, 25 and 27 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, thus rendering moot the rejection of these claims.

Claim 1 recites an electronic assembly, which comprises, *inter alia*, "a body molded on the wiring harness to, simultaneously, completely encapsulate the wiring harness and at least part of the connectors, the body being molded on the wiring harness by injecting a material into a mold containing the wiring harness and the connectors, curing the material and removing the molded body from the mold such that the body thus formed forms a one piece element that provides access to the connectors and insulates the wiring harness from the environment outside the electronic assembly." The cited portions of Tamer do not disclose, teach or suggest these aspects of claim 1.

By way of review, the cited portions of Tamer disclose an electrical connector 10 that includes first and second body portions 40, 42 (identified by the Office Action as the "molded body" of claim 1). *See* Tamer at FIG. 3 and col. 4, lines 22-29. The first body portion 40 includes first and second inline connectors 44, 46 which enable electrical coupling between the smart power connector and the power and data lines 18, 18', 16, 16'. The first and second inline connectors 44, 46 each consist of two end portions 44, 45', 47 and 47' (identified by the Office Action as the "connectors" of claim 1). *See* Tamer at col. 4, lines 27-32. The cited portions of Tamer further disclose that the electrical terminals of the first and second inline

connectors 44, 46 are electrically coupled by four conductors 58 (identified by the Office Action as the "wiring harness" of claim 1).

With this said, and as explained during the Interview, the cited portions of Tamer do not disclose, teach or suggest "a body molded on the wiring harness to, simultaneously, completely encapsulate the wiring harness and at least part of the connectors." In particular, Applicant disagrees with the Office Action's determination that body 40 is molded on the wiring harness. Body portion 40 merely corresponds to a housing in which strips of metal conductors 58 are formed. *See* Tamer at col. 4, lines 53-57 "[t]he conductors 58 are preferably strips of metal stamped on the inner-bottom side of the first body portion 40, and electrically insulated from the rest of the connector in potting material." As such, in view of the fact that the wire strips 58 (identified by the Office Action as the "wiring harness" of claim 1) are positioned inside the body 40, i.e. after making the body 40, it is self-evident that the body 40 cannot possibly be molded on the wire strips 58. Had the body 40 been molded on the wire strips 58, the material that forms the body 40 would completely fill the space between the wire strips 58 and the external portion of the body 40. However, this is not the case here. As can be seen in FIGS. 5-7 of Tamer, the body 40 is a shell in which the wire strips 58 are formed. Therefore, the body 42 is not molded on the wire strips 58.

Applicant notes that a body molded on the wiring harness imparts unique structural characteristics to the electronic assembly of claim 1 that are not met by the body 40 of Tamer. For example, as noted above, the material that constitutes the body 40 of Tamer does not completely fill the space between the wire strips 58 and the external portion of the body 40. As a result, in order for the wire strips 58 and wire 60 to remain still and electrically insulated from the rest of the connectors within the body 40, the interior of the body must be filled with a second material, as disclosed by Tamer. *See* Tamer at col. 4, lines 55-62 "[t]he conductors 58 are preferably strips of metal stamped on the inner-bottom side of the first body portion 40, and electrically insulated from the rest of the connector in potting material. In instances where flexible wires are used instead of the stamped metal strips, the potting material immobilizes the wires to prevent breakage in addition to providing electrical insulation." The use of this second material is not needed in the electronic assembly of claim 1 by virtue of the fact that the body is molded on the wiring harness.

In addition, claim 1 has been amended to positively recite that the body is molded on the wiring harness by injecting a material into a mold containing the wiring harness and the connectors, curing the material and removing the molded body from the mold such that the body thus formed forms a one piece element that provides access to the connectors and

insulates the wiring harness from the environment outside the electronic assembly. As noted above, this manufacturing process for the body imparts structural characteristics to the electronic assembly of claim 1 that are not met by the body 40 of Tamer. *See* MPEP 2113 "The structure implied by the process steps should be considered when assessing the patentability of product-by-process claims over the prior art, especially where the product can only be defined by the process steps by which the product is made, or where the manufacturing process steps would be expected to impart distinctive structural characteristics to the final product."

Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 1 is patentable over the cited portions of Tamer.

Claims 13-16 are patentable over the cited portions of Tamer at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1 and for the additional features recited therein.

Claim 17 is patentable over the cited portions of Tamer for at least similar reasons as provided above for claim 1 and for the features recited therein. For example, in view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that the cited portions of Tamer do not disclose, teach or suggest an electronic assembly comprising, *inter alia*, "a body molded on the wiring harness with a material to, simultaneously, completely encapsulate said wiring harness and to cover a portion of each of said plurality of connectors so as to provide access to each of the plurality of connectors, the material in contact with both the wiring harness and the environment outside the electronic assembly, the material of the body being molded on the wiring harness so as to form a one piece element that provides access to the connectors and insulates the wiring harness from the outside environment, the body including integrated fixtures that are configured to attach the electronic assembly to a support."

Claim 18 is patentable over the cited portions of Tamer at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 17 and for the additional features recited therein.

Claim 20 is patentable over the cited portions of Tamer for at least similar reasons as provided above for claim 1 and for the features recited therein. For example, in view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that the cited portions of Tamer do not disclose, teach or suggest an electronic assembly comprising, *inter alia*, "a body molded on the wiring harness to, simultaneously, completely encapsulate said wiring harness and to cover a portion of each of said plurality of connectors so as to provide access to each of the plurality of connectors, said molded body including a base portion that extends between said plurality of connectors, a socket affixed to the molded body, the socket being connected to the wiring harness, and a conductive coating on the outer surface of the molded body." Further, claim

20 has been amended to recite the features of claims 3 and 8, which claims have been found novel over Tamer. Thus, claim 20 is patentable over the cited portions of Tamer.

Claim 22 is patentable over the cited portions of Tamer at least by virtue of its dependency from claim 20 and for the additional features recited therein.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-2, 13-18, 20-22, 25 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) based on Tamer are respectfully requested.

Claims 3-5 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Tamer in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,207,989 to Becker. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 23 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, thus rendering moot the rejection of claim 23.

Claims 3-5 are patentable over the cited portions of Tamer at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1 and for the additional features recited therein.

The cited portions of Becker do not remedy the deficiencies of Tamer. The cited portions of Becker merely disclose a container for packaging electronic components which are susceptible to damage from electrostatic discharge or fields. *See* Becker at col. 1, lines 58-63. However, the cited portions of Becker are silent as to an electronic assembly, which comprises, *inter alia*, “a body molded on the wiring harness to, simultaneously, completely encapsulate the wiring harness and at least part of the connectors, the body being molded on the wiring harness by injecting a material into a mold containing the wiring harness and the connectors, curing the material and removing the molded body from the mold such that the body thus formed forms a one piece element that provides access to the connectors and insulates the wiring harness from the environment outside the electronic assembly”, as in claims 3-5. Therefore, any proper combination of the cited portions of Tamer and Becker cannot result, in any way, in the invention of claims 3-5.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 3-5 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Tamer in view of Becker are respectfully requested.

Claims 8-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Tamer in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,541,457 to Morrow. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 8-10 are patentable over the cited portions of Tamer at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1 and for the additional features recited therein.

The cited portions of Morrow do not remedy the deficiencies of Tamer. The cited portions of Morrow merely disclose a container 10 that receives various components. *See* Morrow at FIG. 3. However, the cited portions of Morrow are silent as to an electronic assembly, which comprises, *inter alia*, “a body molded on the wiring harness to,

simultaneously, completely encapsulate the wiring harness and at least part of the connectors, the body being molded on the wiring harness by injecting a material into a mold containing the wiring harness and the connectors, curing the material and removing the molded body from the mold such that the body thus formed forms a one piece element that provides access to the connectors and insulates the wiring harness from the environment outside the electronic assembly”, as in claims 8-10. Therefore, any proper combination of the cited portions of Tamer and Morrow cannot result, in any way, in the invention of claims 8-10.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 8-10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Tamer in view of Morrow are respectfully requested.

Claims 11-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Tamer in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,013,872 to Lockwood. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 11-12 are patentable over the cited portions of Tamer at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1 and for the additional features recited therein.

The cited portions of Lockwood fail to remedy the deficiencies of Tamer. The cited portions of Lockwood disclose an electrical box 10 having walls 12 defining a housing 14 that houses conductor wires 20. *See* Lockwood at col. 2, lines 30-32 and FIG. 1. However, unlike the body of claim 1, the electrical box 10 is not molded on the conductor wires 20. Quite to the contrary, the cited portions of Lockwood disclose that the electrical “box 10 is designed to receive one or more electrical cables 16 for connection to other cables,” the cables 16 including the conductor wires 20. Nowhere do the cited portions of Lockwood remotely disclose, teach or suggest a body molded on the conductor wires. Nor do the cited portions of Lockwood disclose, teach or suggest an electronic assembly, which comprises, *inter alia*, “a body molded on the wiring harness to, simultaneously, completely encapsulate the wiring harness and at least part of the connectors, the body being molded on the wiring harness by injecting a material into a mold containing the wiring harness and the connectors, curing the material and removing the molded body from the mold such that the body thus formed forms a one piece element that provides access to the connectors and insulates the wiring harness from the environment outside the electronic assembly.” Accordingly, any proper combination of Tamer and Lockwood cannot result, in any way, in the invention of claims 11 and 12.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 11-12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Tamer in view of Lockwood are respectfully requested.

Claims 6-7, 19 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Tamer in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,764,487 to Natsume. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 24 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, thus rendering moot the rejection of this claim.

Claims 6 and 7 are patentable over the cited portions of Tamer at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1 and for the additional features recited therein. Further, claim 19 is patentable over the cited portions of Tamer at least by virtue of its dependency from claim 17 and for the additional features recited therein.

The cited portions of Natsume do not remedy the deficiencies of Tamer. The cited portions of Natsume disclose an electrical junction box that comprises a housing in which various components are arranged. *See* Natsume at FIGS. 2 and 3. However, the cited portions of Natsume are silent as to an electronic assembly, which comprises, *inter alia*, “a body molded on the wiring harness to, simultaneously, completely encapsulate the wiring harness and at least part of the connectors, the body being molded on the wiring harness by injecting a material into a mold containing the wiring harness and the connectors, curing the material and removing the molded body from the mold such that the body thus formed forms a one piece element that provides access to the connectors and insulates the wiring harness from the environment outside the electronic assembly”, as in claims 6 and 7. Further, the cited portions of Natsume are silent as to an electronic assembly, which comprises, *inter alia*, “a body molded on the wiring harness with a material to, simultaneously, completely encapsulate said wiring harness and to cover a portion of each of said plurality of connectors so as to provide access to each of the plurality of connectors, the material in contact with both the wiring harness and the environment outside the electronic assembly, the material of the body being molded on the wiring harness so as to form a one piece element that provides access to the connectors and insulates the wiring harness from the outside environment, the body including integrated fixtures that are configured to attach the electronic assembly to a support”, as recited in claim 19. Therefore, any proper combination of the cited portions of Tamer and Natsume cannot result, in any way, in the invention of claims 6, 7 and 19.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 6, 7, 19 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Tamer in view of Natsume are respectfully requested.

Claim 26 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Tamer in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,120,327 to O'Brien et al. Claim 26 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, thus rendering moot the rejection of this claim.

Applicant has addressed the Examiner's rejections and objections and respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is earnestly

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solicited. If any point remains in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, please contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number 033975. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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